

Message Text

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ORIGIN SAB-01

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DRAFTED BY S/AB:AMB.BUNKER:JK

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 226507

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS; PN PFOR

SUBJECT; U.S.-PANAMA TREATY NEGOTIATIONS: DELIVERY OF
MESSAGE TO MINISTER-NEGOTIATOR TACK

FOR AMBASSADOR JORDEN FROM BUNKER

1. THIS IS MESSAGE NO. 2 FROM THE DEPARTMENT RESPECTING
THE SEPTEMBER 1975 NEGOTIATING ROUND (IN RECESS FROM 9/17
TO 9/27).

2. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR CONVEYING THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE
TO TACK AS SOON AS CONVENIENT.

3. BEGIN QUOTE: DEAR TONY: I WOULD BE LESS THAN CANDID
IF I DID NOT SAY THAT I WAS DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED AT THE
STATEMENT RELEASED TO THE PRESS BY YOUR GOVERNMENT LAST
SATURDAY.

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT FELT IMPELLED TO THIS
STEP BECAUSE OF THE STATEMENT MADE BY SECRETARY KISSINGER
AT ORLANDO WHICH YOU INTERPRETED AS DISCLOSING CERTAIN
ASPECTS OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS FAVORABLE

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TO THE UNITED STATES TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF PANAMA.

I EXPLAINED TO YOU, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESS REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS GAVE A MISLEADING AND ERRONEOUS

INTERPRETATION OF WHAT HE INTENDED TO CONVEY. I BELIEVED THAT THE STATEMENT I GAVE YOU ON MY DEPARTURE LAST WEDNESDAY PROVIDED AN ACCURATE EXPLANATION OF THE SECRETARY'S INTENT. I BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE ACCEPTED AS SUCH.

I CAN UNDERSTAND THE DESIRE OF YOUR GOVERNMENT TO CORRECT THE ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION CREATED AMONG YOUR PEOPLE BY THIS INCIDENT, AND HOPED THAT THE PUBLICATION OF THE STATEMENT WOULD HAVE EFFECTIVELY DISPELLED ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS WHICH HAD ARISEN BETWEEN US. SECRETARY KISSINGER'S SUBSEQUENT MESSAGE TO GENERAL TORRIJOS REAFFIRMED OUR DESIRE TO MOVE AHEAD WITH THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND REAFFIRMED ALSO THE US COMMITMENT TO THEIR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION.

THE PUBLICATION, HOWEVER, IN SUCH DETAIL OF THE PRESENT STATUS OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS RAISES A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS:

-- ONE IS THE EFFECT THIS WILL HAVE ON OUR CONGRESS AND WHETHER IT WILL LEAD TO CONGRESSIONAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE FREEDOM OF OUR NEGOTIATING POSTURE.

-- A SECOND IS WHETHER THIS IS A PRECURSOR OF FURTHER DISCLOSURES OF NEGOTIATING POSITIONS.

-- A THIRD IS THE FACT THAT THIS APPEARS TO BE A DISTINCT DEPARTURE FROM WHAT I TOOK TO BE OUR AGREEMENT TO CARRY ON OUR DISCUSSIONS ON A BASIS OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND "NO SURPRISES." I MUST CONFESS THAT WE WERE GREATLY SURPRISED BY THE EXTENT OF THE PANAMANIAN DISCLOSURES.

-- A FOURTH IS THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WE CAN CONTINUE TO CARRY ON OUR TALKS IN THE SAME SPIRIT OF FRANKNESS, "GIVE AND TAKE," AND RELAXATION THAT HAS CHARACTERIZED THEM UP TO NOW -- AND WHICH HAS BEEN SO PRODUCTIVE.

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I SINCERELY HOPE THAT WE SHALL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE IN THE FUTURE AS WE HAVE IN THE PAST.

AS I HAVE STATED FREQUENTLY (AND AS YOUR STATEMENT RECOGNIZED), OUR PROPOSALS ARE NEGOTIABLE. IF WE ARE TO HAVE FRUITFUL NEGOTIATIONS I WOULD EXPECT YOUR PROPOSALS TO BE NEGOTIABLE ALSO. THIS, AFTER ALL, IS THE ESSENCE OF ANY

TRUE NEGOTIATION.

MOREY WILL RETURN THIS WEEKEND WITH NICO TO EXPLAIN MORE FULLY THE PROPOSALS WE PRESENTED ON SEPTEMBER 9. AS I EXPLAINED WHEN WE FIRST PRESENTED THEM, THEY ARE COMPLEX

AND NEED PRECISE CLARIFICATION, WHICH WE WERE PREPARED TO PRESENT IMMEDIATELY. I REGRET THAT WE DID NOT HAVE AN OCCASION TO DO SO.

ONCE THIS HAS BEEN DONE I HOPE THAT YOU MAY BE IN A POSITION TO FORMULATE YOUR OWN PROPOSALS IN RESPONSE TO OURS AND THAT, AS YOU SUGGESTED, YOUR TEAM WILL THEN BRING THEM TO WASHINGTON IN ORDER TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS. WE WOULD WELCOME SUCH A PROCEDURE AND BELIEVE IT COULD LEAD TO FRUITFUL DISCUSSIONS. MOREY WILL DISCUSS THIS IN MORE DETAIL WITH NICO.

WITH MANY THANKS TO YOU AND ANAYANSI FOR YOUR GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY AND WITH MY VERY WARM PERSONAL REGARDS, SINCERELY, ELLSWORTH BUNKER. END QUOTE. INGERSOLL

SECRET

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